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 RUEHJM/AMCONSUL JERUSALEM 2852
 RUEHJI/AMEMBASSY JIDDA 4334
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 S E C R E T TEL AVIV 00012 COMBINED SECTION
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E.O. 12065: RDS-1, 3 1/2/02 (LEWIS, SAMUEL W.) OR-M
 TAGS: PEPR, IS, US, LE, MILI
 SUBJECT: SENATOR PERCY'S MEETING WITH HANON BAR-ON,
 DECEMBER 28, 1981

1. SECRET - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. SUMMARY. FOLLOWING HIS MEETING WITH THE FOREIGN
 MINISTER, SENATOR PERCY AND STAFF MEMBERS SANDERS,
 COHEN AND BANNERMAN, AND MRS. SANDERS MET FOR 40
 MINUTES WITH THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE FOREIGN
 MINISTRY, HANON BAR-ON, AMBASSADOR LEWIS, ICA OFFICER

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BARRY JACOBS AND CONTROL OFFICER SCOTT ATTENDED. MOST OF THE CONVERSATION DEALT WITH LEBANON. BAR-ON EXPRESSED CONCERN WITH THE PLO BUILDUP THERE, AND THE DANGER IT PRESENTS FOR THE CEASE-FIRE. HE NOTED IF THE CEASE-FIRE BROKE DOWN, ISRAEL'S OPTIONS WERE LIMITED. SENATOR PERCY STRESSED THE POTENTIAL HARM OF AN ISRAELI ACTION IN LEBANON, UNLESS IT WAS CLEARLY SELF-DEFENSE, AND PRESSED FOR ASSURANCES ON WHAT CONSTITUTED DEFENSIVE USE OF AMERICAN SUPPLIED WEAPONS. END SUMMARY.

3. BAR-ON OPENED THE CONVERSATION BY EXPRESSING ISRAEL'S CONCERN ABOUT THE PLO BUILDUP IN LEBANON. LONG RANGE ARTILLERY AND ROCKETS ARE COMING TO THE PLO FROM SYRIA AND LIBYA. IN SPITE OF AMBASSADOR HABIB'S EFFORTS, THE FLOW HAS NOT BEEN CURTAILED. THIS IS A VIOLATION OF THE CESSATION OF HOSTILITY AGREEMENT, ACCORDING TO BAR-ON. THIS SERIOUSLY DESTABILIZES THE SITUATION AND GRAVELY ENDANGERS THE CEASE-FIRE. TO FURTHER COMPLICATE ISSUES, THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS WILL TAKE PLACE NEXT SUMMER.

4. RESPONDING TO SENATOR PERCY'S QUESTION ABOUT HOW TO PREVENT ELECTION OF A SYRIAN CANDIDATE TO THE LEBANESE PRESIDENCY, BAR-ON REPLIED "STRENGTHEN THE CHRISTIANS"(BASHIR) BY HELPING THEM GET CLOSER TO SUNNI MODERATES AND GET FOREIGN FORCES OUT OF LEBANON.

5. BAR-ON ADDED THAT THE HABIB MISSION, WHILE IT HAD NOT ACHIEVED ALL ITS GOALS, HAD GREATLY EASED THE SITUATION. NEVERTHELESS, IF THE CEASE-FIRE IS BROKEN, ISRAEL HAS VERY FEW OPTIONS.

6. THE SENATOR OBSERVED THAT ISRAEL MUST HAVE NO DOUBT THAT IF MILITARY FORCE IS USED IN LEBANON, EXCEPT IN CLEAR SELF-DEFENSE, THE PRESIDENT AND CONGRESS WOULD HAVE TO ACT. HE STRESSED THE NEED TO REMOVE AS MUCH AMBIGUITY AS POSSIBLE ON WHAT CONSTITUTES DEFENSIVE USE OF AMERICAN SUPPLIED WEAPONS. OTHERWISE, THE CHANCES OF SURPRISES BETWEEN OUR TWO

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COUNTRIES ARE INCREASED. HE PRESSED BAR-ON FOR ISRAELI ASSURANCES ON WHAT CONSTITUTES DEFENSIVE USE OF AMERICAN SUPPLIED WEAPONS.

7. BAR-ON REFUSED TO BE DRAWN OUT BEYOND OBSERVING THAT IT IS DIFFICULT TO SAY WHAT IS DEFENSIVE USE; IT DEPENDS ON CIRCUMSTANCES. MOREOVER, WHAT WE HAVE IS A TERRORIST ORGANIZATION USING A MILITARY FORCE FOR TERRORIST ENDS. THIS IS AN AREA WHERE THERE IS VERY LITTLE PRECEDENT. WHAT KIND OF RESPONSE TO A SHELLING IS SELF-DEFENSIVE? WHAT DO YOU DO?

8. SENATOR PERCY COMMENTED THAT HE COULD SEE NO JUSTIFICATION FOR CALLING AN ATTACK ON THE SYRIAN MISSILES IN THE BEKAA VALLEY SELF-DEFENSE OF ISRAEL. HE OBSERVED THAT THE U.S. AND ITS ALLIES HAD NO RIGHT TO ATTACK SOVIET MISSILES IN THE WARSAW PACT COUNTRIES.

9. BAR-ON QUESTIONED THE COMPARISON, NOTING THAT THE SOVIET MISSILES WERE EMPLACED INSIDE THE BORDERS OF ALLIES. WHO "INVITED" THE SYRIANS TO PUT MISSILES IN LEBANON WAS MUCH MURKIER. IN ANY EVENT, ISRAEL HAS ESCHewed MILITARY OPTIONS IN THE HOPE OF FINDING A DIPLOMATIC SOLUTION.

10. THE SENATOR ASKED IF THERE WAS ANY QUESTION THAT A GROUND INCURSION WOULD NOT BE SELF-DEFENSE, IN THE ABSENCE OF MAJOR CHANGES IN THE CURRENT SITUATION. BAR-ON REPLIED THAT THE KEY QUESTION IS HOW TO DEFINE
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MAJOR CHANGE. ISRAEL WOULD SEE SHELLING AS A MAJOR CHANGE. BAR-ON INDICATED THAT PROPORTIONALITY OF RESPONSE WAS NOT ACCEPTED BY ISRAELIS.

11. AMBASSADOR LEWIS POINTED OUT THAT THE PRIME MINISTER HAS SAID ISRAEL WON'T ATTACK UNLESS ATTACKED. SENATOR PERCY OBSERVED THIS RULES OUT PREEMPTION. THE AMBASSADOR NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT THE QUESTION OF

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PROPORTIONALITY REMAINED. SENATOR PERCY REITERATED
HIS STRONG DESIRE TO SEE AS MUCH AMBIGUITY REMOVED
FROM THE SELF-DEFENSE ISSUE AS POSSIBLE.

12. THIS MESSAGE CLEARED WITH CODEL PERCY'S PARTY. LEWIS

END OF MESSAGE

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